

From the Upper Chamber



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Report for Wednesday, March 5, 2008

The twenty-eighth day of the 2008 legislative session was called to order by Lieutenant Governor **Casey Cagle**.

Senator **Don Balfour** of the 9th stated that the journal had been read and was found to be correct.

Senate Bills 550 and 551, House Bills 521, 639, 1116, 1132, 1186, 1189, 1226, 1245, 1281 and 1352 and House Resolution 1556 were read for the first time and assigned to committees. The clerk then read the reports of standing committees and second readers.

Sen. **Bill Heath** of the 31st moved to suspend the rules so that the report of the Senate Retirement Committee could be read. There was no objection.

After the afternoon roll call, Sen. **Dan Weber** of the 40th led the Senate in the Pledge of Allegiance. He then introduced the *Chaplain of the Day*, Pastor **Stephen Streett** of the Mount Vernon United Methodist Church in Dunwoody, who led the Senate in the daily devotional.

Sen. **Renee Unterman** of the 45th rose on a Point of Personal Privilege to recognize the Georgia Women's Senate Caucus and commemorated women earning the right to vote through the Women's Suffrage Movement.

President Pro Tempore **Eric Johnson** of the 1st took the well to offer condolences to Senate aide **Andrew Long** and his wife, **La Tonia**, on the loss of their expected child.

Sen. **Joseph Carter** of the 13th took the well to commend the efforts of Senators **Preston Smith** of the 52nd and **Regina Thomas** of the 2nd regarding SB 506, known as the *SHAPE Act*, and reiterate the importance of the legislation.

Sen. **Ross Tolleson** of the 20th took the well to urge Senators to be mindful and considerate of addressing the water issue concerning Tennessee and Georgia.

The clerk read Senate Resolution 916, which recognizes today as Peanut Butter and Jelly Day at the Capitol. Sen. **John Bulloch** of the 11th took the rostrum to speak to the resolution.

Sen. **John Douglas** of the 17th took the well to announce that tomorrow is Atlanta Motor Speedway Day at the Capitol.

Sen. **Greg Goggans** of the 7th took the rostrum to introduce the *Doctor of the Day*, Dr. **Joel Higgins** of Waycross.

The clerk read SR 1045, which congratulates **Leah Massee** for being crowned Miss Georgia. Sen. **Carter** took the well to speak to the resolution.

Sen. **Bill Jackson** of the 24th took the rostrum acknowledge Chairman **Walker T. Norman** of the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners, who was seated in the Senate gallery

Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms **John Long** escorted Sens. **Jeff Mullis** of the 53rd, **David Adelman** of the 42nd, **Bill Cowser** of the 46th and **David Shafer** of the 48th and their guests to the rostrum.

The clerk read SR 983, which recognizes and commends Dr. **Charles Bullock, III**, a political science professor at the University of Georgia, for his outstanding and exemplary service to education, politics, his community and the state. Sen. **Mullis** took the rostrum to speak to the resolution and to introduce Dr. **Bullock** to the Senate.

The clerk read the report of the Senate Retirement Committee.

The Senate Consent Calendar for Privileged Resolutions, consisting of SR 1075-1087, was adopted.

The Senate Local Consent Calendar, consisting of HB 1010 and 1011, was adopted by a vote of 51 to 0.

The clerk read SB 522, which allow certain animals, such as sugar gliders, to be exempt from wild animal permit requirements and allowed to be kept as pets.

Sen. **John Bulloch** of the 11th took the well to present the Committee Substitute. He yielded to questions from Sens. **Mitch Seabaugh** of the 28th and **Heath**.

The Committee Substitute to SB 522 was unanimously adopted.

SB 522 passed by substitute by a vote of 53 to 0.

Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms **John Long** escorted Sens. **Johnson, Thomas** of the 2nd and **Jack Hill** of the 4th, and their guests, to the rostrum.

The clerk read SR 1080, which recognizes and honors the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee, Chairman **John P. Forbes** and the 2008 St. Patrick's Day Parade's Grand Marshal Dr. **Francis Patrick Rossiter, Jr.** Sen. **Thomas** of the 2nd took the rostrum to speak to the resolution.

SB 520 was read. The bill makes it a misdemeanor to remove a dog's collar without the owner's permission.

Sen. **Greg Goggans** of the 7th took the well to present the bill. He yielded to questions from Sen. **Carter**.

SB 520 passed by a vote of 52 to 0.

The clerk read SR 765, which designates today as "Lupus Awareness Day" in Georgia. Sen. **Adelman** took the rostrum to speak to the resolution.

The clerk read SB 515, makes changes and corrections in the structure of the Georgia Seed Development Commission.

Sen. **Bulloch** took the well to present the bill and Amendment 1, which requires the Commissioner of Agriculture to appoint one member, a farmer that grows crops or turf, to the Commission.

Amendment 1 to SB 515 was unanimously adopted.

SB 515 passed as amended by a vote of 50 to 0.

The clerk read SB 502, which allows certified parole officers employed by the parole board who leave the board under certain conditions to retain their badges. Sen. **Johnny Grant** of the 25th took the well to present the bill.

SB 502 passed by a vote of 51 to 0.

SB 499 was read, which provides license requirements for life settlement providers/brokers.

Sen. **Ralph Hudgens** of the 47th took the well to speak to the Committee Substitute.

Committee Substitute to SB 499 was unanimously adopted.

SB 499 passed by substitute by a vote of 52 to 0.

The clerk read SB 458, which allows students of schools that lose or fail to attain accreditation to receive a scholarship to attend a private school or permission to attend another public school.

Sen. **Johnson** took the well to present the Committee Substitute. He yielded to questions from Sens. **Horacena Tate** of the 38th, **George Hooks** of the 14th, **Ronnie Chance** of the 16th and **Valencia Seay** of the 34th.

Sen. **Steve Thompson** of 33rd took the well to speak in support of the bill. He yielded to questions from Sen. **Vincent Fort** of the 39th.

Sen. **Thomas** of the 2nd took the well to speak in support of the bill.

Sen. **Michael Meyer von Bremen** of the 12th took the well to speak against the bill, voicing concerns with honor students at public schools that need improvement taking advantage of vouchers and leaving.

Sen. **Seay** took the well to also speak against SB 458 and in support of Amendment 1 to the bill. She reiterated that every child deserves quality education.

Sen. **Seth Harp** of the 29th took the well to speak in support of the bill.

Sens. **Fort** and **Davenport** took the well to speak against the bill.

Sen. **Tate** took the well to discuss specific concerns with the bill and yielded to questions from Sen. **Fort**.

Sen. **Johnson** took the well to close the debate.

Amendment 1 was unanimously adopted.

The Committee Substitute to SB 458 was unanimously adopted as amended.

SB 458 passed by substitute by a vote of 32 to 21.

The clerk read SB 498, which requires a physician to examine patients prior to any cosmetic laser services are performed.

Sen. **John Wiles** of the 37th took the well to speak to the bill and his amendment, which establishes provisions for obtaining an assistant laser practitioner license. He yielded to questions from Sen. **Nan Orrock** of the 36th.

Amendment 1 was unanimously adopted.

The Committee Substitute to SB 498

SB 498 passed by substitute by a vote of 53 to 0.

The clerk read SB 479, which reduces license fees for ambulance services.

Sen. **Jeff Mullis** of the 53rd took the well to present the Committee Substitute.

The Committee Substitute to SB 479 was unanimously adopted.

SB 479 passed by substitute by a vote of 54 to 0.

The clerk read SB 471, which requires domestic insurance companies to report financial examinations every five years.

Sen. **Hudgens** took the well to present the bill.

SB 471 passed by a vote of 52 to 1.

The clerk read SB 453, which makes it illegal to distribute any illegal substances near a park or recreation area.

Sen. **Unterman** took the well to present the bill.

The Committee Substitute to SB 453 was unanimously adopted.

SB 453 passed by substitute by a vote of 54 to 0.

The clerk read HR 1556, which outlines the future schedule of the Senate.

Majority Leader **Tommie Williams** of the 19th took the well to discuss the upcoming schedule of the Senate.

HR 1556 was unanimously adopted.

Following the announcements, Sen. **Williams** moved that the Senate stand adjourned until 9:00 a.m., Thursday, March 6.

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